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In a society where mutants and former mutants alike feel threatened by the world around them, they turn to their first, best line of defense whenever trouble arises: X-Factor, the private detective agency founded by Madrox, the Multiple Man.

X-FACTOR

What happened last issue: While serving as bodyguard to Lenore, a former mutant, Longshot thwarted an assassination attempt by Lenore's mother at the exact same time that he failed to thwart an assassination attempt by Lenore's mother. This confused a lot of readers, which is fine, because it was supposed to, and will be explained as we go. Meanwhile, Guido and Rictor learned of the existence of the Rev. John Maddox, a dupe of Madrox's, and headed east to meet him to see if they could get a lead on what happened to Madrox. Except we know (but they don't) that Madrox was catapulted into the future with Layla and found himself face to face with both Ruby Summers and her father, the cyborg-ified Scott Summers, first introduced in the Layla Miller one-shot, and if you missed it, now's as good a time as any to dig up a copy.

Finally, people thought that Peter David's describing the next issue's events in the recap page was him in a bad mood. Not at all. He simply decided that, instead of putting out no information about upcoming issues, he'd put out so much stuff that you never know when he's kidding and when he's not. To that end:

What happens next issue: Madrox shaves; there is no follow-up to this issue's cliffhanger whatsoever; and Monet strips down and gets it on with Darwin. Be sure to let everyone on the internet know.

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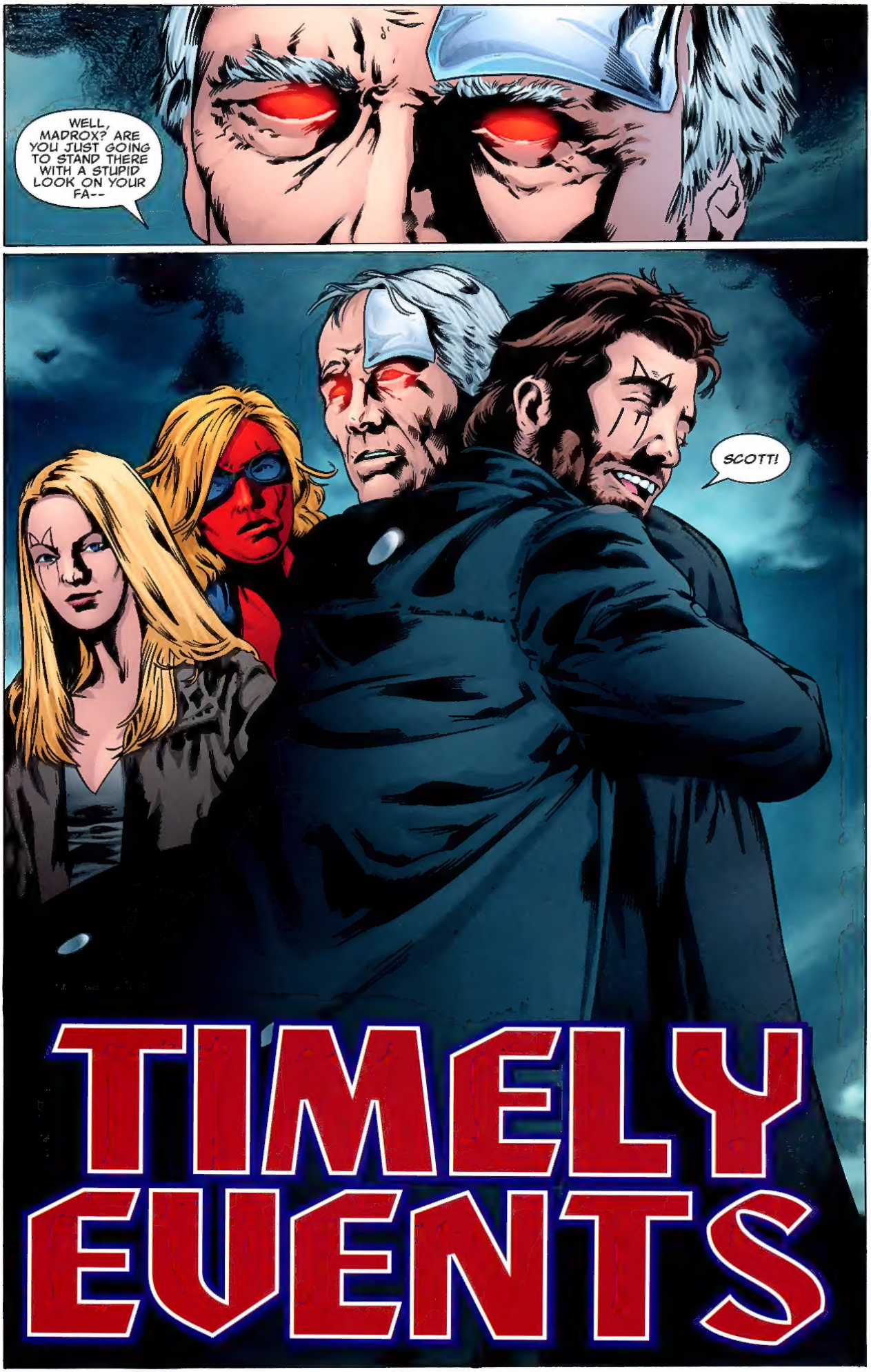
HELLO?
HELLO, LONGSHOT? ARE YOU UP THERE?
IT'S DARWIN. THERESA SAID I SHOULD SWING BY ON THE WAY BACK FROM SCHOOL AND CHECK IN ON YOU.
HELLO?
HMMMF. THAT'S WEIRD.
OH! MA'AM! GOOD TIMING! PERHAPS YOU CAN HELP ME--
--OR... NOT. NOT IS FINE, TOO.

DARWIN! STOP HER!
STOPPING HER REALLY ISN'T AN ISSUE AT THE MOMENT.
KEEP BACK! KEEP BACK OR HE DIES!
MA'AM, WITH ALL RESPECT, I'VE BEEN THREATENED BY FAR MORE FORMIDABLE PEOPLE THAN YOU.
I'LL SHOOT HIM!
GO AHEAD. IT'S ALWAYS INTERESTING TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE DO THAT.
AH
AH

WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT--?
OH MY GOD!
YES, SORRY, I THINK THAT WAS MY BAD.
I BELIEVE MY LUCK POWER CAUSED THE GUN TO BACKFIRE.
LONGSHOT...
EEEEEYAARRHHH!!!
TRAGIC, REALLY. IF ONLY SHE HADN'T MANAGED TO MAKE IT TO THE ELEVATOR, I WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO TAKE THE STAIRS AND THIS COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED.
LONGSHOT! INJURED WOMAN! FOCUS!
OH. I SUPPOSE WE SHOULD CALL AN AMBULANCE.
Y'THINK!?
I MEAN, HOLY CRAP, LONGSHOT! ARE YOU SAYING YOU CAUSED THIS TO HAPPEN TO HER!?
I'M AFRAID SO.
DON'T BE TOO ANGRY WITH LONGSHOT, LENORE. HE SAVED YOUR MOTHER'S LIFE.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!?
AT THE LAST MOMENT, SHE TURNED THE GUN AWAY FROM ME.
SHE WAS TRYING TO KILL HERSELF.

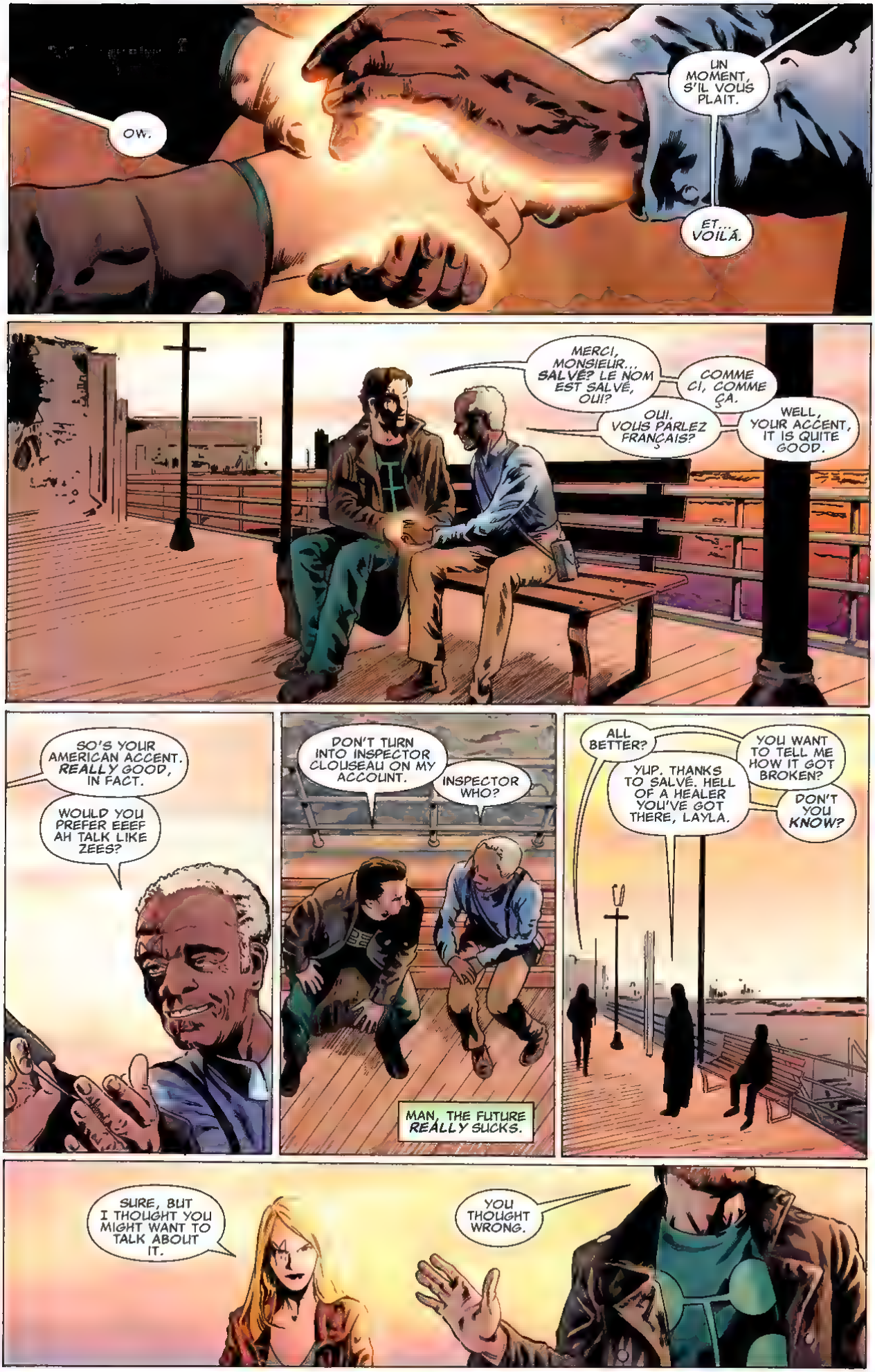

WELL, MADROX? ARE YOU JUST GOING TO STAND THERE WITH A STUPID LOOK ON YOUR FA--
SCOTT!
TIMELY EVENTS

I HATE TO INTERRUPT THE LOVE FEST...
...BUT MORE SENTINELS COULD SHOW UP ANYTIME. IN FACT, THEY PROBABLY WILL...
RIGHT. SORRY, THAT...
...THAT WASN'T VERY "NOIR." THE WHOLE HUGGING THING.
COME ON, MADROX. LET'S GO.
ATLANTIC CITY. IT'S OUR STRONGHOLD.
WHERE, EXACTLY?
YOUR STRONGHOLD, AS PART OF THE "SUMMERS REBELLION."
RIGHT.
AND YOU'RE REBELLING AGAINST... SENTINELS, I TAKE IT?
RIGHT AGAIN.
OKAY. THIS WHOLE FAR FUTURE THING ISN'T SO TOUGH.
SO DO WE ALL HAVE FLIGHT RINGS OR PERSONAL JETPACKS?
DON'T BE AN IDIOT.
THE FUTURE SUCKS.

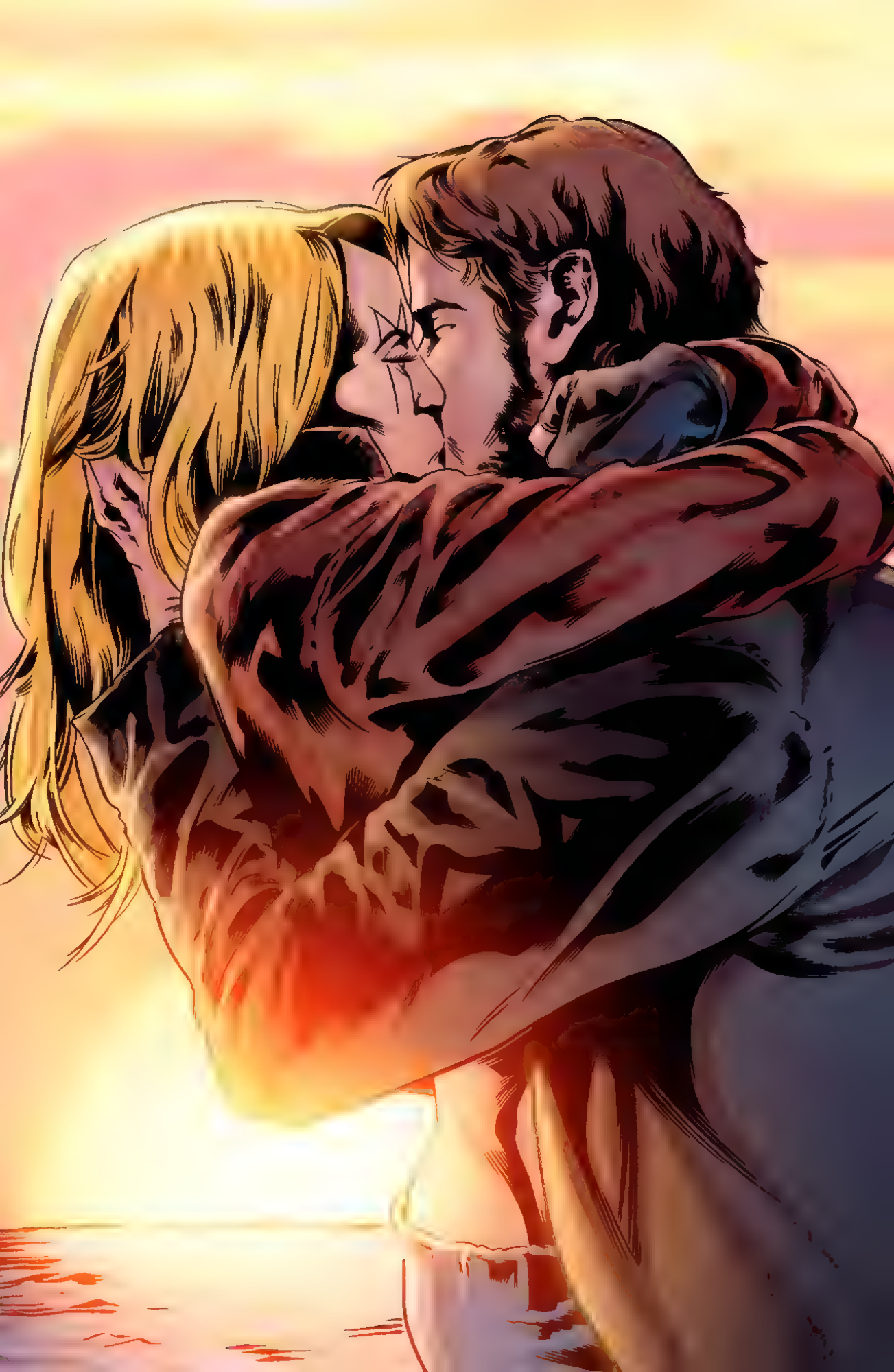
YO, RIC. WAKE UP.
MMM...?
WE'RE HERE.
WHAT TIME IS IT?
TIME TO GET UP.
THAT'S HELPFUL.
ABOUT TEN A.M.
SO WE MADE IT HERE TO VERMONT IN... WHAT? ABOUT ELEVEN HOURS?
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
YOU MUST BE EXHAUSTED, GUIDO.
I GOT ENOUGH ENERGY STORED UP TO GO FOR A WEEK WITHOUT SLEEP IF I GOTTA. 'COURSE AFTER THAT I CRASH OUT FOR A FEW DAYS.
TERRY'S GOING TO REALIZE WE'RE GONE BY NOW, Y'KNOW.
YEAH.
SHE WON'T BE HAPPY.
SHE AIN'T CRACKED A SMILE IN A MONTH, RIC, BEING HAPPY AIN'T HER THING THESE DAYS.
GOOD POINT.
KNOK KNOK

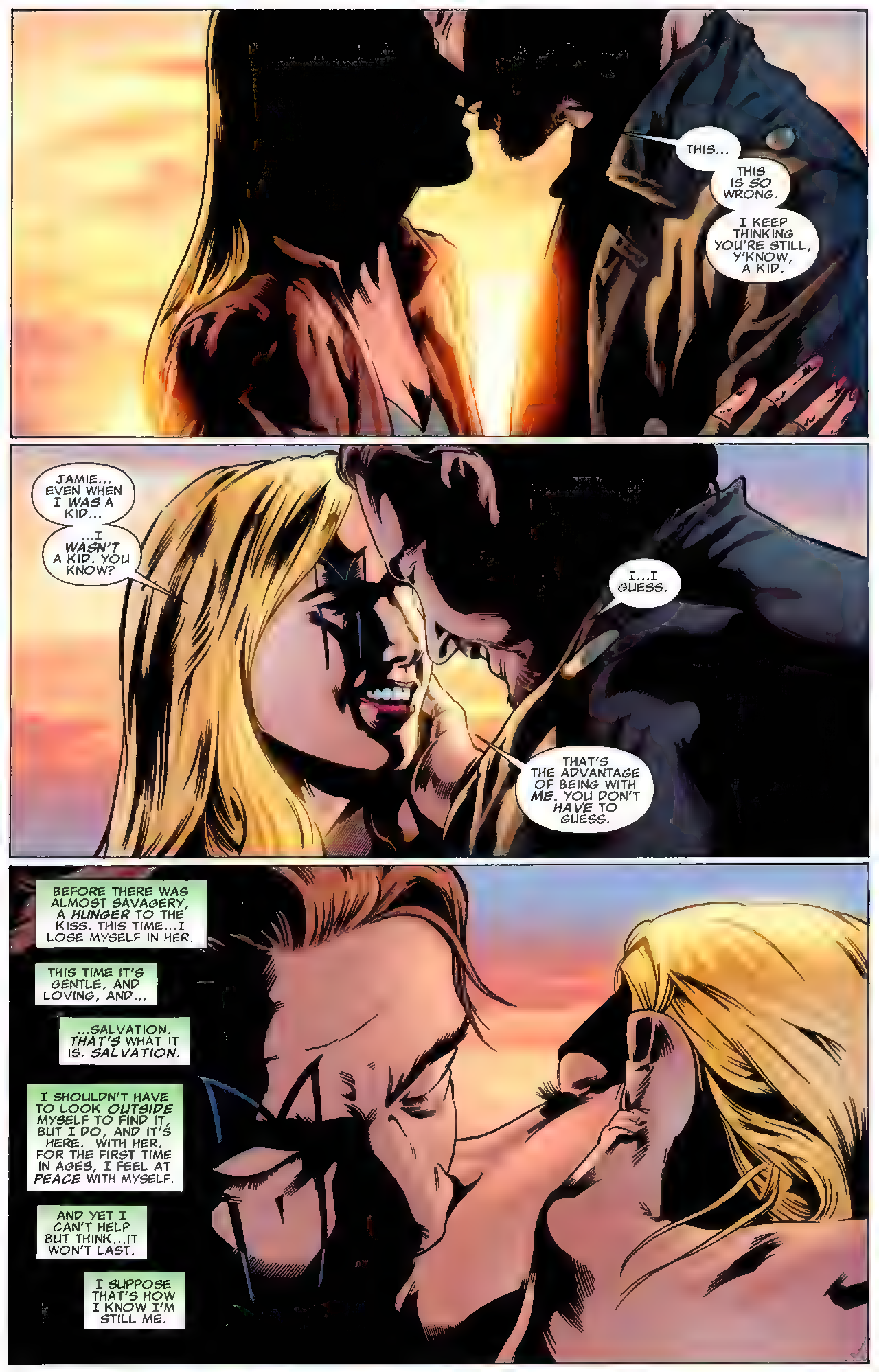
NO MORE INTERVIEWS.
SLAM
SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK THAT'S GONNA REPLACE "HELLO, MAY I HELP YOU?"
UH...LADY? WE'RE NOT REPORTERS!
OR COPS.
AND WE'RE NOT COPS!
THEN WHO ARE YOU?
WE'RE DICKS!
KNOK KNOK
EXCUSE ME?
EXCUSE ME?
PRIVATE DICKS. FLATFOOTS. GUMSHOES. Y'KNOW... DETECTIVES.
YEAH, OKAY, YOU HUNG AROUND MADROX WAY TOO LONG.
IF YOU'RE PRIVATE DETECTIVES, WHO'S YOUR CLIENT?
CAN'T TELL YOU THAT.
CONFIDENTIALITY?
NO, WE JUST DON'T HAVE ONE.
WHAT IS THIS, FULL DISCLOSURE DAY?
LOOK, THE LADY'S JUMPY; WE SHOULD JUST BE UP FRONT WITH HER.

LISTEN, MRS. MADDOX... I ASSUME THAT'S WHO YOU ARE...
MRS. MADDOX, A FRIEND OF OURS IS MISSING, AND WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE YOUR HUSBAND MIGHT KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT IT. SO WE WANTED TO ASK HIM.
I SWEAR ON MY FATHER'S GRAVE, THAT'S THE WHOLE THING.
HOLD ON.
NICE JOB.
DON'T THANK ME YET. SHE MIGHT BE CALLING THE POLICE TO RUN US OUTTA HERE.
SO MADROX IS YOUR "FRIEND" NOW?
SOUNDED BETTER.
THAT ALL IT IS?
I JUST... I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THAT DAY. WITH THE BABY. I WAS SO ANGRY AT HIM...
BUT I BEEN THINKING ABOUT WHAT IT MUST'VE BEEN LIKE FOR *HIM*.
DON'T GET ME WRONG, HE'S NOT MY FAVORITE GUY IN THE WORLD--
BUT?
SHE SHOULDN'T'VE BROKE HIS *FINGER*, MAN.
SHE JUST...
IT WAS WRONG. AND SOME WOUNDS GO WAY DEEP, AND FESTER, AND NEVER GO AWAY.
LIKE LOSIN' YOUR POWERS? OR A GIRL LEAVIN' YA?
OUCH, MAN.


OW.
UN MOMENT, S'IL VOUS PLAIT.
ET... VOILÀ.
MERCI, MONSIEUR... SALVÉ? LE NOM EST SALVÉ, OUI?
COMME CI, COMME ÇA.
OUI. VOUS PARLEZ FRANÇAIS?
WELL, YOUR ACCENT, IT IS QUITE GOOD.
SO'S YOUR AMERICAN ACCENT. *REALLY* GOOD, IN FACT.
WOULD YOU PREFER EEEF AH TALK LIKE ZEES?
DON'T TURN INTO INSPECTOR CLOUSEAU ON MY ACCOUNT.
INSPECTOR WHO?
MAN, THE FUTURE *REALLY* SUCKS.
ALL BETTER?
YUP. THANKS TO SALVÉ. HELL OF A HEALER YOU'VE GOT THERE, LAYLA.
YOU WANT TO TELL ME HOW IT GOT BROKEN?
DON'T YOU *KNOW*?
SURE, BUT I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT.
YOU THOUGHT WRONG.

WHY DID YOU BRING ME HERE, LAYLA?
I HAD MY REASONS.
GOOD ONES?
GUESS IT DEPENDS ON YOUR POINT OF VIEW.
MY POINT OF VIEW IS ALL I'VE GOT!
DON'T TELL ME WHAT MY PROBLEM IS.
BULL. JAMIE, YOU'VE GOT ABOUT THREE MILLION POINTS OF VIEW. THAT'S ALWAYS BEEN YOUR PROBLEM.
BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT SUCH A GOOD HANDLE ON IT?
WHY DIDN'T YOU COME GET ME?
WHY DIDN'T YOU COME BACK?
DON'T YOU THINK I WANTED TO!
HOW HARD DID YOU TRY?
STOP SAYING THE SAME TH--!
I'M NOT TRYING T--!
OH, FOR--




THIS...
THIS IS SO WRONG.
I KEEP THINKING YOU'RE STILL, Y'KNOW, A KID.
JAMIE... EVEN WHEN I WAS A KID...
...I WASN'T A KID. YOU KNOW?
I...I GUESS.
THAT'S THE ADVANTAGE OF BEING WITH ME. YOU DON'T HAVE TO GUESS.
BEFORE THERE WAS ALMOST SAVAGERY, A HUNGER TO THE KISS. THIS TIME...I LOSE MYSELF IN HER.
THIS TIME IT'S GENTLE, AND LOVING, AND...
...SALVATION. THAT'S WHAT IT IS. SALVATION.
I SHOULDN'T HAVE TO LOOK OUTSIDE MYSELF TO FIND IT, BUT I DO, AND IT'S HERE. WITH HER. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN AGES, I FEEL AT PEACE WITH MYSELF.
AND YET I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK...IT WON'T LAST.
I SUPPOSE THAT'S HOW I KNOW I'M STILL ME.

OH...MY GOD. GUIDO. AND...
...UH... ROBERTO...?
RICTOR.
RIGHT, RICTOR SORRY.
SO WE WEREN'T IMAGINING IT. YA REALLY ARE A--
Can we not use the "D" word within earshot of my family?
They don't know?
How would you suggest I broach the subject?
Good point. Can we go somewhere where we don't have ta whisper?
COME. I HAVE A PRIVATE STUDY ATTACHED TO THE CHURCH. WE CAN GO THERE--
"--AND NOT BE DISTURBED."

I'M REALLY STARTING TO HATE THIS HOSPITAL.
I DON'T BLAME YOU. WE SHOULD START GETTING FREQUENT CUSTOMER POINTS.
WHERE THE HELL IS 14-C?
PROBABLY BETWEEN 14-B AND--
I DON'T NEED THE SARCASM RIGHT NOW, MONET! OKAY? I DON'T--
EXCUSE ME! IN CASE YOU DIDN'T NOTICE, THIS IS A HOSPITAL! WITH PATIENTS AND EVERYTHING!
DO I NEED TO CALL SECURITY?
I'M SORRY. SHE'S...WE'RE SORRY. WE'RE LOOKING FOR 14-C.
AROUND THE CORNER, SECOND DOOR ON THE RIGHT.
AND PLEASE KEEP IT DOWN. WE HAVE PEOPLE HERE IN DELICATE CONDITION.
OKAY
THANKS FOR STEPPING IN. "DELICATE CONDITION." MY GOD.
I KNOW.
I WANTED TO SAY, "SECURITY? BRING IT ON."
I KNOW.
I'D KILL FOR SOME SECURITY.
I KNOW.

GROUCHO. HARPO. GOOD TO SEE YOU.
YOU HAVEN'T HEARD FROM CHICO AND ZEPPO, HAVE YOU?
YOU MEAN GUIDO AND RICTOR?
WHERE DID THEY GO?
JUDGING BY THE TIMING, I'D GUESS THEY DID EXACTLY WHAT I TOLD THEM NOT TO DO. I'LL DEAL WITH THEM LATER.
SO AM I TO UNDERSTAND THAT LENORE'S MOTHER TRIED TO KILL HER?
I KNOW. THIS CASE HAS TAKEN A STRANGE TURN...
WE'RE X-FACTOR. AS FAR AS OUR CASES GO, THIS BARELY REGISTERS ON THE STRANGE-O-METER.
MONET--?
I'M ON IT.
WH-WHAT'S SHE DOING?
MONET, AMONG HER MANY TALENTS, IS A TELEPATH.
SHE CAN SCAN YOUR MOTHER'S MIND AND DETERMINE WHETHER SHE WAS IN CHARGE OF HER ACTIONS OR IF SOMEONE ELSE WAS DRIVING.
YOU MEAN LIKE THE VULCAN MIND MELD?
YES, JUST LIKE, EXCEPT THERE'S NO WEIRD INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PLAYING WHILE SHE DOES IT
WOULD IT HELP IF I HUMMED?
IT WOULD HELP IF YOU BOTH BE QUIET.

WHO ARE YOU CALLING?
GUIDO. HE'S STILL NOT PICKING UP.
I'M GOING TO KILL BOTH HIM AND RICTOR WHEN I--
UNNHHHH...
THERESA! MONET'S IN TROUBLE!
UNNHHHHHHH...
MONET!!!!

LENORE! GET A DOCTOR!
O-OKAY! SHOULD I CALL 911?
WE'RE IN A HOSPITAL, OINSEACH!
OH! RIGHT!
LONGSHOT, DON'T YOU HAVE PSYCHIC POWERS? CAN'T YOU HELP HER--?
MY POWERS DON'T WORK THAT WAY.
WE DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO LOSE.
I...I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO GO ABOUT IT. SHE'S--
:URKH:
CORTEX...

DO WE NEED TO FIND YOU TWO A ROOM?
BECAUSE WE HAVE HALF A DOZEN ABANDONED HOTELS, SO THERE'S PLENTY TO ACCOMMODATE YOU.
HEC, COULD YOU EXCUSE US, PLEASE?
CYCLOPS, IF YOU NEED TO SAY SOMETHING, DON'T YOU THINK YOU CAN SAY IT IN FRONT OF ME?
YES.
MADROX. LAYLA. WALK WITH ME.
HECAT'E, STAY HERE.
I'M NOT GOING TO LIE, MADROX: I'M NOT THRILLED THAT LAYLA BROUGHT YOU HERE.
WE'RE IN THE WANING DAYS OF A BATTLE AGAINST SENTINEL DOMINATION...
DID THEY DO THIS TO YOU? Y'KNOW... MESS YOU UP THIS BAD?
NO.
YOU DID.
DON'T WORRY, IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO.
AND YOU'RE ABOUT TO MAKE IT UP TO ME.
BREATHE, JAMIE. BREATHE.

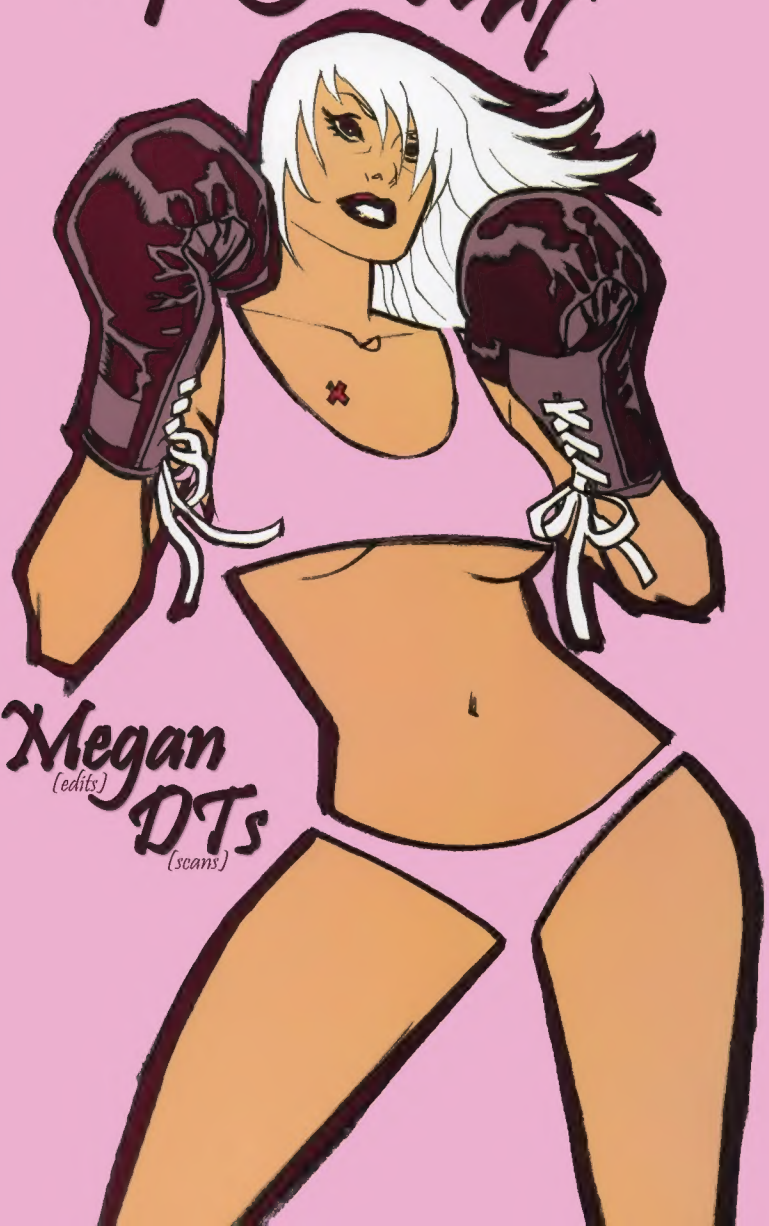
WHEN OUR PEOPLE GO INTO A FIGHT, WE HAVE A CONSTANT TELEMETRY RECORD THAT GOES INTO A CENTRAL COMPUTER.
SO YOU CAN MONITOR THEIR WHEREABOUTS.
RIGHT.
AND--?
WE LOST TRACK OF HECAT'E.
FOR ABOUT TWO SECONDS, WE LOST TRACK OF HER.
SO? IT WAS A GLITCH.
WE DON'T HAVE GLITCHES.
EVEN EIGHTY YEARS IN THE FUTURE, THERE MUST STILL BE SUCH THINGS AS--
WE *DON'T* HAVE *GLITCHES.*
THEN WHAT ARE YOU SUGGESTING? THAT SHE...WHAT...BLINKED OUT OF EXISTENCE FOR TWO SECONDS?
YES. THAT'S *EXACTLY* RIGHT.
YOU'RE A DETECTIVE. I WANT YOU TO FIGURE OUT *WHY.*

...AND JUST AS I WAS COMING AROUND, I SAW MADROX DISAPPEAR INTO THIN AIR.
HIM, AND SOME BLONDE WOMAN WHO HAD THE SAME "M" ON HER FACE AS HE DID.
BLONDE... WOMAN? NOT A *GIRL*?
PERHAPS IN THE "YOU GO, GIRL," SENSE.
WHAT, YOU'RE THINKING MAYBE IT WAS LAYLA?
MADROX TOLD US SHE GOT THE SAME TATTOO AS HIM IN THE FUTURE. WHO KNOWS HOW MUCH TIME HAS PASSED FOR HER SINCE--
HOLY--!!!
SKAK

UH-KAY, ZORRO!
SETTLE DOWN, RIGHT--
OOOOFFFF!
WHAT THE--
--HELL--?

CORTEX...
SHATTERSTAR?!?!?

Tipsy Girl



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DTs (scans)